

II. Bills

S. 1545, Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2003 (the DREAM Act) [Hatch, Durbin, Craig, DeWine, Feingold, Feinstein, Grassley, Kennedy, Leahy, Schumer]

S. 1691, the Wartime Treatment Study Act [Feingold, Grassley, Kennedy]

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT AND THE COURTS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on "Common Sense Consumption: Super-Sizing Versus Personal Responsibility" on Thursday, October 16, 2003, at 2 p.m. in Room 226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Panel I: Senator Mitch McConnell, Kentucky.

Panel II: Victor Schwartz, Partner, Law Firm of Shook, Hardy, & Bacon, L.L.P., Washington, D.C.; Russell L. Sutter, Principal, Tillinghast-Towers Perrin, St. Louis, MO.

Panel III: Wayne Reaves, President, Manna Enterprises, Inc., Anniston, AL; Dr. Gerard Musante, Founder, Structure House, Durham, NC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Shay Wester, a staff person in my office who does not currently have floor privileges, be admitted to the floor during the time of my brief remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privilege of the floor be granted to Michael Gayle during consideration of this legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 245 which was submitted yesterday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 245) designating the week beginning October 19, 2003, as National Character Counts Week.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today with my friend Senator DODD to introduce a resolution regarding "National Character Counts Week." Our

resolution says the week of October 19 of this year will be known across the country as "National Character Counts Week."

Nearly a century ago President Theodore Roosevelt said the following about character:

Character, in the long run, is the decisive factor in the life of an individual and of nations alike.

I would submit that character truly does transcend time as well as religious, cultural, political, and socioeconomic barriers. I believe our country is having a renewed focus on character and this sends a wonderful message to Americans, and will help those of us involved in character education reinvigorate our efforts to get communities and schools involved.

I say that because a number of years ago we started this approach to character education called "Character Counts." Senators Nunn, DODD, and I first introduced the resolution that has now passed the Senate on innumerable occasions. The resolution simply declares that for all of America, one week during the year will be known as "National Character Counts Week."

Frankly, we hear a lot about how we should help our young people growing up in this often difficult society. However, I believe the key is finding those ideas and programs that work. We all understand that there are certain people who have the primary responsibility to care for our children like mothers, fathers, siblings, and grandparents. We are not in any way talking about negating that responsibility of raising a child with good values. However, we have found the teachers in our schools have been yearning for something they could teach our children that for some reason had been eliminated from both the public and private school agenda curriculum. It is sometimes referred to as character education.

I choose to speak about the "Character Counts" program that is being used in many public schools in our country, and certainly in my State of New Mexico where teachers embrace six pillars of character. The values comprising the six pillars are everyday concepts that Americans across this land wish their children would have and hope America will keep. They are simply: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. They transcend political and social barriers and are central to the ideals on which this Nation was built.

As a matter of fact, I think they are central and basic to any nation that survives for any long period of history. As Plato once said:

A country without character is a country that's doomed and the only way a country can have character is if the individual citizens in the country have character.

I could speak for hours about the 200,000 New Mexico schoolchildren in public, private and parochial schools learning about good character. About 90 percent of the grade school children,

and a significant portion of the others, are now participating in character education programs that simply and profoundly bring them into contact with each of these pillars one month at a time.

So if you walk the halls of a grade school in Albuquerque, you might see a sign outside that says, "This Is Responsibility Month." And all the young people will be discussing the concept of responsibility in their classrooms, and they will put up posters saying, "Responsibility Counts." At the end of that month they may have an assembly where responsibility will be discussed by all the kids, and awards will be given to those demonstrating the most responsibility. The next month it might be "respect." The month after that it might be "caring."

I could go on for quite some time talking about Character Counts in New Mexico. The bottom line is that I believe it is working in New Mexico and other parts of the country. Consequently, I think we need to salute the efforts already underway and encourage even more character education across our country.

So today, Senator DODD and I are here to introduce a resolution to accomplish just that and hopefully our renewed effort will bring together even more communities to ensure that character education is a part of every child's life.

I hope that my colleagues will support this effort.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, today I join my friend and colleague from New Mexico, Senator DOMENICI, in introducing a resolution declaring next week "National Character Counts Week." Senator DOMENICI and I have worked together for many years on the issue of character education and hope that by designating a special week to this cause, students and teachers will come together to participate in character building activities in their schools. In 1994, Senator DOMENICI and I established the Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project and have worked regularly since then to commemorate National Character Counts Week. I am pleased that we are continuing our efforts today to help expand States' and schools' abilities to make character education a central part of every child's education.

Our schools may be built with the bricks of English, math and science, but character education certainly is the mortar. Character education means teaching students about such qualities as caring, citizenship, fairness, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, and other qualities that their community values.

Character education provides students a context within which to learn. If we view education simply as the imparting of knowledge to our children, then we will not only miss an opportunity, but will jeopardize our future. Character education isn't a separate subject, but part of a seamless garment